



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

March 10, 1999

H.R. 449

Gateway Visitor Center Authorization Act of 1999

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on March 3, 1999

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 449 would cost less than \$1 million a year, subject to the availability of appropriated funds. H.R. 449 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to execute an agreement with the Gateway Visitor Center Corporation under which this nonprofit organization would construct and operate a regional visitor center on Independence Mall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The bill would authorize the corporation to charge fees, sell food, merchandise, and tickets, and provide information, facilities, and services to visitors to the Independence National Historical Park and other regional sites. Amounts earned from fees and sales would be used by the corporation to help pay for its operating expenses. The National Park Service (NPS) would provide visitor information and facilities and offer interpretive programs.

Based on information provided by the NPS, and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO expects that the agency would provide an annual contribution toward the operation of the center. The appropriate federal contribution has not yet been determined by the NPS, but CBO estimates that it could be several hundred thousand dollars a year. Some of the annual contribution may be offset by savings in operating expenses that may be realized when the NPS closes its existing visitor center at the park once the new Gateway Visitor Center becomes operational in fiscal year 2000.

H.R. 449 would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis. This estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.